Wage settlement with Bank employees

782. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the current wage settlements of the bank employees expired on 30th June last year and the year-long wage negotiations have been deadlocked;

(b) whether Government had shown any interest to invite the bank employees' unions to come to the negotiating table after their protest strike on 28th September, 1988; and

(c) whether the Chairman, Indian Banks' Association had fixed any date for negotiations with the bank employees' unions by mutual convenience as per his assurance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The Fourth Bipartite Settlement on wages and other terms of Service conditions of workmen employees of banks expired on 30th June, 1987 and Negotiations for finalisation of the Fifth Bipartite Settlement have been going on between IBA, representing the managements of the banks and employees' unions.

(b) and (c) Government is keen that the current negotiations are concluded as early as possible. The Chairman, IBA is reported to have been holding informal discussions with the unions after the strike of the bank employees on 28th September and accordingly next round of discussions was scheduled for 28th and 29th October. However, due to an injunction issued by the Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta, IBA was restrained from holding further negotiations and discussions could, therefore, not take place.

It is understood from IBA that the Hon'ble Court has since passed an order allowing IBA to proceed with negotiations and, according, fresh dates for discussions with the unions have been fixed up.

Export of Agricultural products

783. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an excellent potential for exports of all agricultural products, including fish and milk, in view of break through in production;

(b) whether Government are aware that the so-called surpluses are because of lack of purchasing power and high prices of protective nutritional foods; and

(c) whether Government are also aware that even small exports of farm products raise prices in India disproportionately and if so, whether Government would ban all exports till production is more than domestic needs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) The potential for exports of various items including agricultural products is dependent upon domestic production and availability for export, domestic prices vis-a-vis the intnernational prices for the product, acceptability of our products in the international market in terms of quality packaging and delivery schedule etc.

(b) and (c) Availability of exportable surpluses is a function of supply and demand. The share of exports of agricultural items as against total agricultural production is extremely small and unlikely to affect domestic availability and prices. On account of improved agro-climatic conditions with the recent monsoon the availability of agricultural production both for domestic consumption and export is likely to increase.